The IDLER

Public Occurrences, Comment, Excursions & Rational Entertainment

Nr 7 MARCH 1965 50c THE COPY

National Security National Interest & Humpty Dumpty

SHAVIAN LITERATURE

OTHER DOMESTIC MATTERS

We believe that it would be helpful if someone put all the government's security officers in the State Department auditorium (better make that D.C. Stadium — they'll need it) and explained to them what the terms *national security* and *national interest* mean. There seems to be some confusion on this point.

For example, former Navy Secretary Fred Korth had this problem in dealing with the *Thresher* incident. Senator Clinton Anderson wrote Korth in the summer of 1963 demanding that the Navy release the transcript of the investigation by the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy into the tragedy. Back comes Korth with a letter saying that publication of the transcript "could materially downgrade our offensive-defensive submarine weapons systems, both in the public mind and the minds of the officers and men that man them . . . Also such release could have an extremely detrimental effect on the Navy's current endeavors to integrate qualified volunteer line officers into the nuclear submarine program."

In a more mundane case, a *Washington Post* reporter attempted to interview agent Rufus Youngblood after he had been placed in charge of the White House Secret Service detail. The newsman did not ask for an outline of White House security procedures or for a wiring diagram of the East Wing. He simply inquired:

—How did Youngblood feel about getting the new job?

—Was he looking forward to it?

—Why did he give up a career in engineering to work in the Secret Service?

Youngblood refused to answer any questions whatsoever, referring the reporter to Inspector Burrill Peterson, who is the Secret Service's press man.

Fair enough, in this age of spokesmen and speech writers, when nothing is so rare as the man who speaks for himself. But what did Inspector Peterson say? Just this:

"I'm not surprised he didn't comment. Things that fall in the area of security can't be discussed."

When news that will hurt the Navy's public relations image or a comment on how a man feels about getting a promotion fall into the category of national security, someone had better start rewriting the rules.

Mr. Korth and his successor, Paul Nitze, who held up the release of the hearing transcript for eighteen months, were doing nothing more than trying to suppress information embarrassing to the Navy. The explanation for Inspector Peterson's comment is harder to come by. We suspect he just slipped into the "national security" jargon out of habit, without realizing the ludicrous quality of his statement. (It should be noted that agent Youngblood gave a

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The Idler

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much more sensible reason for not answering the questions of a nosey reporter. "I have so doggone much work to do that I don't have time fore an interview," he told the newsman.)

And so it goes day after day in this town. The shroud of secrecy is indiscriminately dropped over facts and figures because of one agency's whim or another's fear.

Withheld information is not the only result of confusion over what the nation's security and interest require.

Recent revelations concerning Civil Service testing and interviewing procedures make clear that the government now demands not just loyal employees unendangered by potential threat of black-mail, but individuals who will never cause a ripple on a polygraph or receive a low quotient on a personality test. One must not only be intelligent, able and efficient, but have all the fabled qualities of a Boy Scout. The search for the well-adjusted civil servant with nary a personality disorder has led to impertinent questions and procedures on the part of civil service examiners and, in more than a few cases, down-right invasion of privacy

Selecting the Group

The attitude of the Civil Service Commission has been expressed by its head, John R. Macy, Jr., in these words:

"Any applicant for federal employment knows in advance that his record will be investigated . . . The thoughtful applicant will recognize that the investigation process is a safeguard to himself, for he can be confident that the work force he seeks to join is a select group; and to his country, for he knows that the inquiry is made in the national interest."

Thus, we presume, the government is justified in asking any question, pursuing any line of investigation, from attempting to discover the most intimate details of an applicant's sex life to determining by supposedly scientific methods his psychological adjustment ability. We wonder, however, if Mr. Macy has considered the possibility that the "thoughtful applicant" may, in many cases, throw the application blank away, being just thoughtful enough to realize that if someone — even in the government — hires you to do a job, he is not

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therefore entitled to X-ray your life, habits and personality.

The current loose definitions of *national security* and *national interest* have permitted the security-seekers to surpass even the dreams of the late Senator McCarthy. Senator McCarthy had a primitive concept of security.

As a rule, you had to be a Red, a fellow-traveller, a sex pervert or an acquaintance of such persons to count as a risk. This led to the problem of proving these facts to be true, and it was here that poor Joe McCarthy met his downfall.

Broaden the concept of national interest and security to include questions of personality and psychological tendencies and one is quite free of the responsibility of proving anything.

You take the advice of your experts and that's that. Neurotics don't carry membership cards or go to clandestine meetings. One staff psychiatrist is worth five Whittaker Chamberses.

It reminds us of *Alice Through the Looking Glass:*

"But 'glory' doesn't mean 'a nice knock-down argument,'" Alice objected.

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less."

Fred Korth, Inspector Peterson and John Macy would have gotten along just fine with Humpty Dumpty.

A six-year-old Washington gentleman recently attended church services at which the President was present. When the services ended, Mr. Johnson spotted the boy and shook hands with him. "I worked for you in the campaign," the youth told the President. Mr. Johnson smiled and gave him a LBJ pin.

On the way home with his parents, the boy lost the pin in the snow. Realizing the potential crisis involved when a six-year-old campaign worker loses a pin given him by the President, the parents searched frantically for the pin. Finally, the boy shrugged his shoulders and said, "That's all right. I'll get another when I see him next Sunday."

One of our earliest literary influences was Shavian in nature. We remember with pleasure the poetic beauty of a sign along a Maine highway:

BIG NEW TUBE
JUST LIKE LOUISE
GET A LOT
IN EVERY SQUEEZE
BURMA SHAVE

L. F. Willard, writing in *Yankee Magazine,* adds to our collection of Burma-Shaviana. He reports that the firm with red signs once erected this one:

TEAR THE TOP
OFF YOUR CAR
SEND IT IN FOR
A TEN POUND JAR
BURMA SHAVE

According to Willard, "A large segment of the American public did just that and car tops arrived at the Burma Shave factory in alarming quantities."

The Burma Shave people have now given one of the last of their signs to the Smithsonian Institution and the markers have all but disappeared from the highways. We are not happy about their departure. But about all we can think to do about it is to start erecting signs that read:

SINCE THE RED SIGNS
THEY WON'T SAVE
LET'S ALL SWITCH
TO RAPID-SHAVE

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SALTLICKHAM

We had our annual town meeting the other night. It was the foggiest night of the year.

In fact, the fog was so thick Craig Hawthorn, who had been shingling his roof that afternoon, nailed shingles five feet out into the fog, when all of a sudden it cleared and Craig fell to the ground and broke his shoulder. At least that is what they said. He wasn't at the meeting.

Inside the town hall, things weren't much clearer. Big debate was over whether we should approve a bond issue to improve the Saltlickham High School. Charlie Thurston of the *Picayune-Item* got up and said no. The town's too far in debt already, he said, and he didn't want to leave his children and his children's children a big bill to pay.

Well, that kind of got me fired up so I rose and said, angry like, "Now listen here, Charlie Thurston, first you write editorials saying you don't want the Federal government messing around in education; then you say you don't want the town doing anything, either. Who's going to do it? The kids, out of their milk money?"

I was going to say more but Elizabeth kicked me and so I sat down. Still fuming, though, I was.

Wil Crockett then got up and pointed out that Saltlickham had been in debt since 1692 and that Charlie's father and his father's father had left him with all that debt and he hadn't noticed Charlie paying it up lately. Everyone got a chuckle out of that—except Charlie.

Mrs. Pillywilly wanted to know if we could add an amendment that would permit prayers to be read at lunchtime in defiance of the Supreme Court.

The Reverend Hilcrest said he thought the Almighty would be satisfied if they settled for making the improvements in the school and raising the teacher's salaries. If God had any score to settle with Earl Warren he could do that later on, at the proper time.

The bond issue was approved and we turned to other matters.

Mrs. Pillywilly suggested the Town Manager write a letter to New York complaining about the bad image given to New England communities by *Peyton Place*. The Town Manager got out of that by saying his TV set was busted and he didn't want to write about something he hadn't seen. He did promise, however, to go over to Bill Wilson's place some evening and watch the show and then report back at the next annual meeting. Mrs. Pillywilly got up again, but I was already on my feet, moving that we adjourn. The motion carried.

It was a good thing we decided to do something about the school. Yesterday, the eleventh grade chemistry class proved conclusively that vaporized gasoline when ignited can cause quite a mess. My nephew wanted to write a report on the experiment for a scientific journal, but his teacher said it had been done before. Eleventh grade chemistry is meeting temporarily in the carpentry shop.

—*Uncle Abner*

The Americans for Democratic Action came under repeated attack during last fall's campaign. Representative William Miller* took particular pleasure in pointing out Hubert Humphrey's connection with the organization. "Pink sheets" were circulated, alleging evil designs on the part of ADA. And Goldwaterites spoke ill of the group every chance they got.

So what happened? The Washington office of ADA was swamped with letters, membership applications and editorial clippings supporting or praising the organization.

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*Remember him? A onetime Vice-Presidential candidate, Miller is ex-expected to appear in print next in *Newsweek's* "Where are They Now?" column.

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Down in Charleston, S. C., the *News and Courier* printed in full an ADA fund-raising letter. It contained an exposition of ADA's views. The paper obviously hoped it would expose ADA's wicked intentions. Instead, the letter convinced several people who read it to join up. One man wrote that he had been planning for a long time to join ADA but did not know the address until he saw it in the letter reproduced by the *News and Courier*.

Publicity elsewhere brought letters like these:

"Will you please send me information about the ADA and the requirements for membership? Any group which has provoked such a furor from Birchers, bitchers and boobs as has the ADA must be of intrinsic merit and value."

A high school senior in Texas wrote:

"I have not been able to find any factual, undistorted information about ADA. . . . Could you please send me any. . . . Anything you might have must be sent to the address given below as my father is a staunch reactionary Republican and anything coming from the ADA might be damaging to my health."

And:

"I have been thinking about joining the ADA for some time, but unfortunately I have been guilty of procrastination. Representative Miller has given me the necessary incentive to act."

Not everyone was happy with ADA's new prominence. The manager of the clipping service used by the organization wrote to say that it had cost his firm $750 over the fixed fee in October alone to provide ADA with clippings. "For example," he noted, "in October we went close to 4,500 clippings, in September about the same."

So much for trying to alert the American public to the dangers of the ADA. Better luck next time, gentlemen.

Senator Frank Church of Idaho says that the radical right has expanded its membership since 1955 at an average annual rate of 22%. The Birch Society established all time records in new-member recruiting during the campaign months of last fall. The 30 largest organizations raised their annual budgets from $5 million in 1958 to $14 million in 1963. Total spending by all rightwing outfits reached an estimated $30 million in 1964, half again more than both major parties spent in the presidential campaign.

FIRST GOVERNMENT REPORT ON SMOKING AND HEALTH

A custome lothsome to the eye, hatefull to the Noze, harmefull to the braine, dangerous to the Lungs, and in the blacke stinking fume thereof, neerest resembling the horrible Stigian smoke of the pit that is bottomelesse.

—A Counterblaste to Tobacco by King James I, 1604

The 20 largest right wing publications have a combined circulation in excess of one million. The right is also heard loud and clear on 7000 separate radio broadcasts each week. One of the most successful of the rightist broadcastors, The Reverend (that's what he calls himself) Carl McIntire began his programs in 1958 from a single radio station. Today, thanks to contributions from listeners, he is heard daily on 617 stations. Walter Cronkite, by comparison, is heard on only 192.

And what is all this energy and money being directed towards?

The massive threat of American Communism, represented by a party that has an estimated 8000 members, including, one may assume, a large number of FBI undercover agents. We are as a nation, Senator Church rightly points out, purer than Ivory Soap.

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THE IDLER'S JOURNAL

I had intended to treat the Inauguration with indifference. On the evening of January 19th, 1961, I had trudged for three snow-filled hours from Capitol Hill to Cleveland Park to attend a dinner party before the Gala. Upon my arrival, cold, sweating, and tired, I resolved that no President was worth all this trouble and consigned Inaugurations to the category of things to be avoided.

But that resolve faltered and finally failed this year as the Inauguration grabbed the city of Washington in a giant bear hug, refusing to let go until the last strains of Guy Lombardo's band had echoed into silence beyond the fake flowers and blue streamers hanging from the rafters of the National Armory.

If you live in Washington, you just can't ignore Inaugurations. They are times of no-parking signs, presidential photos propped in restaurant windows, slowed traffic, schedules of events in the evening paper, announcements by television stations of coverage plans, and people running around doing important things.

They are times of press releases announcing that "Michelle Portwood, 20-year-old 'Miss Indian America,' arrived last night at Friendship International Airport to ride at the head of the Indian section of Wednesday's Inaugural Parade. . . ."

They are times of telephone calls: "Hey, you don't think you could get me a couple of tickets to the ball. . . ?"

They are, in short, times when, since you have to get your feet wet anyway, you might as well go in swimming.

This realization crept up on me slowly. It wasn't until the District of Columbia had posted a large red, white and blue sign on a tree in front of my door announcing the Inauguration parking ban that I fully comprehended I had been made an official part of the ceremonies.

I began reading Dale Miller's news releases with more care. They had started in dribbles but soon were coming at the rate of several per day:

"A true replica of the historic Liberty Bell will boom out a salute from the nation's thousands of Savings Bonds volunteers . . ."

"Dr. Paschal Sherman, chairman of a special sub-committee for Indian Participation in 1965 Inaugural events, ... expressed the hope that Indians from as many regions as possible will attend the Inauguration."

"Unfortunately, President Harrison died a month after he took office . . ."

"Chimes for the Presidential swearing-in ceremony will be provided again this year by the Church of the Epiphany, William Armstrong, chairman of the General Service Committee said today. . . ."

"Eighty physicians . . . . Joe Garry, former member of the Idaho State Legislature . . . . twenty-five men on duty at strategic spots . . . . 32-page booklet . . . . Mrs. Perle Mesta . . . . 1841 . . . . Troop 988, Alexandria, Va."

More than 150 news releases later, the Inaugural Committee had still not told me everything there was to know about the celebration. I had to find out on my own that that the presidential cake would be made according to the "Royal Fruitcake" recipe, that ABC-TV would have its own guarded privy, that 5000 Texans were coming to town, and that the tall old man with the dirty hat in the restaurant down the street had obtained a ticket to the swearing-in ceremony. "These are hard to come by," he told me. "See, it lets me walk all around. I could take it downtown and get a lot of money for it."

The mass of details, duly released and reported, added up to a whooping, hollering, everloving, frambunctious good time. That is—if it didn't snow.

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The omens were not good and the memory of 1961's storm hung heavy and cold over the preparations. People told each other:

"The almanac says the coldest weather in 40 years."

"I heard bitter but no snow."

"Nine inches, the man on TV said."

"Well, I heard 21 inches somewhere."

The Inaugural Committee was undaunted. Apparently having analyzed the effect of weather on every major event from Napoleon's retreat to the 1961 Inaugural, the committee lined up men and equipment sufficient to handle the worst. Civil Defense authorities even stocked Ball sites with cots and food enough for an overnight stay. Every precaution was taken short of stationing St. Bernards along the parade route.

The weekend before the Inauguration seemed to make these efforts worthwhile. Cold, big flakes fell and settled.

Trucks moved out and salted the roads.

I discovered that one of my galoshes had a hole in it.

Monday, the weatherman hedged.

Tuesday, my active participation in the Inauguration began with a trip to the Shoreham Hotel where a reception was being held in honor of the Vice President-elect and Mrs. Humphrey, attended by 8000 of their most intimate friends.

The night was cold but it looked as if the bad weather would hold off.

I was glad. I had forgotten to do anything about my galoshes.

At the Shoreham I found myself in a long, thick line that led to one of the hotel's ballrooms. "I wouldn't check your coat," a bellhop warned. "You'll never get it back in this mess." I took his advice.

Down some stairs and into the ballroom. It was filled with people standing, drinking and talking. A cocktail party with elephantiasis.

A balding man was speaking at the rostrum but no one seemed to be listening. Humphrey?

"Mrs. J. R. Wilson, would you please come to the rostrum?"

No, not Humphrey. Not his style.

I made my way to the bar and had a drink. Someone had stuck a heavy white envelope in my hand and I set my glass down on the table to see what was inside. It was the official Inaugural Program, printed on slick white paper with gold headlines.

I noted that William S. White appeared carried away by having his name set in golden type. In *A Study of Leadership* he wrote that Johnson is "a nearly exact prototype of an increasingly melded American society which had made him perhaps the first truly all-continental, the first utterly non-regional, President in our history." He went on:

"The future is in him, in that unconscious blend of daring activism and cautiously restrained and non-evangelical idealism with which he proposes, God and the people willing, to make a Great Society with which to spin the thickening thread of our national life. . ."

I put the program back in its envelope and moved into the next room. Many more people but no Humphrey. He had, I discovered, been and gone. Only his friends were left.

In the center of the room were the remains of an hors d'oeuvres table. Nothing there but a few liquor-logged canapes and a pan of chopped chicken livers floating in gravy. The chicken livers were chopped very fine and the only tools handy to retrieve them were some plastic toothpicks. I tried and failed. The man next to me did better by bending over and keeping his face near the pan, while using two toothpicks as chopsticks. Another had found a soggy cracker somewhere, walked triumphantly up to the table and with a swoop dished into the brown mess.

I recalled Humphrey's words in the letter attached to the Inaugural Program:

"We know we can count on you to help build the Great Society. . . . . Have a wonderful time!"

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Later that evening I went to the Mayflower Hotel for the Young Democrat's dance. A group of girls in red blazers were singing songs in the corridor. They were awful. Each time they concluded, a florid faced man waving two glasses of whiskey would cry out another suggestion: "Let's hear *The Eyes of Texas.*" And each time the girls obliged.

I escaped to the dance floor, where Count Basie and Lester Lanin were taking turns providing the pulse of the evening, a pulse infectious enough to cause one news photographer to put down his camera and start doing the Frug with no one in particular.

Then a pause. The girls in the red blazers came out on the stage and began to sing. Their appearance was mercifully shortened by the arrival of Hubert Humphrey.

The Vice-President-elect said a *few* words, a trick which he has taken some time to master, explaining that he and his wife, who was by his side, would have to go home soon. "You can't soar with the eagles in the morning and hoot with the owls at night," he said.

But Humphrey could never leave so easily. The girls in the red blazers started to sing *Hello Hubert* and he smiled and waved and sang and nodded his head and clapped in time with the music. It was his night and he willingly risked hooting with the owls a while longer. . . . .

The next morning had a chill that slowly gave way to a winter's version of warmth. I walked down to Pennsylvania Ave. Military policemen were at each intersection directing traffic with the impatience disciplined men have toward the undisciplined. A D. C. Transit supervisor ran down the street trying to catch a rerouted bus that had made a wrong turn. And five blocks away, at the Capitol, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sang *Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor.* The sound seemed sweet on Fifth St., which is normally serenaded by transistor radios and children's shouts.

Returning to the office, I turned on the television.

"In a land of great wealth, families must not live in hopeless poverty.

"In a land rich in harvest, children just must not go hungry.

"In a land of healing miracles, neighbors must not suffer and die untended.

"In a great land of learning and scholars, young people must be taught to read and write . . . ."

It's been said better, but however it's said, it has to be said, over and over, until we believe it and act. I was glad the President had put it in such simple and clear phrases.

The oath of office and the address seem almost out of place in an Inauguration so filled with hoopla, exuberance and trivia. For a moment, the celebrants pause to think.

But only a moment. The main event, with its dignity and solemnity, retires gracefully and quickly into history, while the carnival continues noisily to oblivion a few hours hence.

The President disappeared behind the Capitol's columns to have lunch and I wandered down to the Southwest corner of the Senate Office Building to see the crowd. The people there were curious and quiet. They had come to see more than to cheer. You could see this when the presidential bubbletop limousine finally pulled out of the Capitol grounds and turned down Constitution Avenue.

The president was applauded, there were a few shouts, and he was gone, a man who has successfully accumulated every token of support from the people with the exception of their affection and enthusiasm. There is something more than bulletproof glass between Johnson and the public.

The parade, with its marching troops, big bands, and floats emblazoned with lofty themes, was like all such displays, only shorter. If LBJ wants his parade over by sundown (or his budget kept under $100 million) it happens. It's been happening that way for a long time and the President has gotten used to it. . . . . .

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Finally the Inaugural Ball. My tickets were for the one at the National Armory where Lester Lanin, Guy Lombardo, and Louis Armstrong held forth in turn on a revolving stage. As one band's watch was over the stage would slowly wheel revealing another group playing the same tune. It worked fine until, at one point, Lester Lanin signalled his men to cut. They did, but Guy Lombardo, on the other side of the stage, kept playing for several minutes. The sweetest music this side of heaven got a distinctly dirty look from Mr. Lanin.

Standing in my tuxedo sipping coke (It wasn't until later that I discovered the bar downstairs), staring at the gymnasium-like hall, the whole thing reminded me of a high school prom. I would not have been surprised if five minutes before the end they had turned the lights down for the last dance.

I was told that somewhere in this crowd was a lady with a tiara that lit up when she pushed a button, revealing the legend: "Hi, I'm from Texas."

I didn't see the lady but I felt as though I had observed, over the past few days, many of her soulmates.

For tiaras that flash and 8000-guest receptions are an unavoidable part of the spirit of the Great Society. The President speaks of adding beauty and quality to our lives. But for those who might get bored with this, he means to keep (just as at the Armory) a twist band playing in the basement.

As I left the Armory I heard one of Lester Lanin's Beatlesque guitar players talking to a grey-haired, dignified gentleman. "Yeah, Ambassador," he was saying, "you're right. It swung."

I went with some friends to a post-ball party and later to Britt's Cafeteria on Wisconsin Ave. As I sat sipping bad coffee at 4 a.m., I wondered how the chairman of the special subcommittee for Indian Participation had made out. Then I went home to bed.

THE IDLER

ON BUILDING BRIDGES

By J. W. Fulbright

One of the guiding principles of our foreign policy must be the accommodation of conflicting interests in the world by means other than military conflict. We should be under no illusions about the fact that accommodations without conflict mean a peace without victory, or at least without the kind of total victory for American ideals and values that was discussed so much in the recent election campaign. Great nations do not as a general rule surrender their interests and ideologies to other great nations without being compelled to do so. If it is agreed that neither the West nor the Communist nations are able to coerce the other into submission, then it should be clear to both sides that the condition of their survival is the acceptance by each of certain conditions and arrangements in the world that it will find distasteful. The challenge of statesmanship is to devise compromises that respect the vital interests of both sides while requiring concessions that, however distasteful, are at least tolerable.

I believe that we must pursue a policy of building bridges of accommodation with the Communist world, not because this approach is inherently more desirable than one of total victory for American interests but because there is no acceptable alternative in the nuclear age. The usefulness and desirability of a clear and quick victory over all our adversaries can be debated, but such a debate must be academic because the option of complete victory does not exist. The

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Senator Fulbright is Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This address was delivered at Southern Methodist University last December.

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choice before us in our relations with the Communist world is not between victory and defeat but between mutual accommodation and mutual annihilation. If there was ever a time in our history when it was open to us to seek a universal victory for American ideals and institutions — and it may well be questioned that there was — it is clear beyond doubt that that time has passed and that for as far into the future as we can see we shall be living in a world of diverse and often conflicting interests and ideologies.

I do not think there is reason for despair in this state of things. Compromises often turn out to be very much more tolerable than they seem when they are being made and victories even more often turn out to be bitter disappointments. There are two reasons, I think, why the fruits of triumph so often turn to ashes in the victor's hand.

The first is the inescapable limitations of human nature. Man is by far the most generously endowed of God's creatures, but for reasons known best to Himself, the Almighty endowed us liberally with technical and scientific skills but only modestly with the qualities of wisdom and farsightedness. A total victory is really too great a responsibility for any man or any nation. Men are simply not equipped to decide each other's fate, and when they try to do so, the chances are very great that, however good their intentions, the result will be something between tragedy and futility.

Democracy itself is built on this view of human nature. Democratic procedures are based on the assumption that no man has access to absolute truth and that no man, therefore, must be allowed to impose his will upon all others. The genius of democracy is that, unlike other political philosophies, it acknowledges the limits of human wisdom and understanding.

Viewed from the perspective of man's moral and intellectual shortcomings, the shattered hopes and lost victories of the recent past seem somewhat less surprising. A great deal of intellectual energy has been expended in an effort to understand how and why the victory of 1918 was followed in only twenty years by another global conflict and how and why the total victory of 1945 turned almost at once into the cold war that still engages us. These baleful events might well have been avoided, or at least alleviated, by different policies and different decisions at critical moments, but perhaps the basic cause of our disappointments lies in the very totality of the victories we won. Signaling as they did an opportunity to reshape the character of international relations, the victories of 1918 and 1945 were lost largely, I think, because they created opportunities that could only have been realized by the application of far greater wisdom and far greater vision than any of us possesses.

It occurred to us that you might not be able to read his signature, so we thought we would mention that the fine sketches of political figures found in THE IDLER *are done by John Perts of Suffolk, Va.*

The second reason why great military triumphs so often fail to realize their promise lies in the character of conflict itself. War is not merely a method of resolving disputes that preceded it; it is not, as Clausewitz thought, a mere extension of politics.

International conflicts, especially sustained international conflicts, have an evil dynamism of their own. The original causes of modern warfare are soon lost in a maelstrom of passion and destruction; new ambitions are aroused and new forces are released change the character of the conflict and largely determine its outcome and aftermath.

Peace settlements in this age of national and ideological conflict are

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made by angry and agitated men. Nations are profoundly altered by conflict, and whatever their motives for entering a war, they are likely to come out of it embittered, vindictive and physically and morally exhausted, with far more extensive and far less realistic ambitions than those which drove them into war. Reason and wisdom are fragile human qualities, easily consumed in the passions of national conflict. One of the tragedies of modern warfare — perhaps the greatest tragedy — is that it puts men most completely at the mercy of their emotions at precisely the moment when they are most desperately in need of their reason.

On November 29, 1917, the *Daily Telegraph* of London published a letter by Lord Landsdowne about the damage to be wrought by the war then in progress. His prophecy, which was scornfully rejected at the time but tragically vindicated in the outcome, is even more compelling for our own time. "We are going to win the war," he wrote, ". . . . but its prolongation will spell the ruin of the civilized world, and an infinite addition to the load of human suffering which already weighs upon it. Security will be invaluable to a world which has the vitality to profit by it, but what will be the value of the blessings of peace to nations so exhausted that they can scarcely stretch out a hand with which to grasp them?"

We Americans are more susceptible to excessive idealism than to vindictiveness. We have a tendecy to turn conflicts for the defense of our interests into crusades for the regeneration of mankind. In 1917 we went to war to defend our maritime rights and ended by conducting a crusade to "make the world safe for democracy." In the Second World War we remained neutral while most of Europe and much of the Far East were overrun and entered the war only when our own territory was attacked, but then we prosecuted the war to the "unconditional surrender" of our enemies.

In both world wars we dreamed great dreams about a new era of world peace under world law. In both instances we were disappointed, largely, I believe, because our hopes soared beyond the limits of our capacity. In both instances, the price of unattainable aims was the loss of lesser prizes that were well within our grasp. I believe that America and the free world would be safer and happier today if we had not tried to outrun history in 1919 and again in 1945 and had tempered our idealism by combining it with more modest and traditional objectives. "The wicked are wicked, no doubt," wrote Thackery, "and they go astray and they fall, and they come by their deserts; but who can tell the mischief which the very virtuous do?"

Every society has its shortcomings of style and character. Ours, I think, is the mischief of too great virtue, of idealism insufficiently tempered by the sobering wisdom of experience. It is this crusading tendency, so noble in intent, so potentially destructive in its

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consequences, that we must guard against in our relations with the Communist world.

The point that I wish to stress is that in this nuclear age we must learn to live in an imperfect world. We must scale our ideals to the limits of external reality and to the limits of our own capacity. We must recognize, in the words of the old maxim, that "the best is the enemy of the good." We must acknowledge, however regretfully, that it is not open to us to remove the threat of communism from the world but that it is open to us to build bridges to the Communist world and in so doing to influence the course which it follows in a direction compatible with our own safety and with the peace of the world.

The building of bridges is a modest and limited enterprise. In no sense is it to be taken as a harbinger of general reconciliation between the free world and the Communist world. Such a reconciliation is unlikely to occur in our lifetimes, not because we would not like it but because the differences are too great to be eliminated by any process more rapid than the evolution of history.

The building of bridges means nothing more than the opening of normal contacts and communications across a chasm of misunderstanding. It is most unlikely to result in the early resolution of such fundamental issues as the division of Germany, the nuclear arms race, and Chinese Communist aggression in the Far East. And, it should be emphasized, a program of limited accommodations with the Communist world can be only one part of the grand strategy of American national security. The other bases of our national security are the maintenance of the world's most powerful nuclear deterrent force and the maintenance and sustenance of a vigorous Atlantic Alliance. These, I think, are the three bedrocks of our security: none would be an adequate policy by itself and each contributes to the effectiveness of the other.

There is all but unanimous agreement among the American people on the need for military strength and the value of the Atlantic Alliance. It is on the third element of our national security policy — the need for building bridges to the East — that we often find ourselves divided. It is important to emphasize, therefore, that the purpose and effect of limited accommodations with Communist countries are exactly the same as those of our nuclear deterrent and of the Alliance: to reduce the Communist appetite for expansion and thereby to increase our own national security.

The key assumption of a policy of building bridges to the Communist world is that the Communist countries are susceptible to external influence and to internal change. I think the assumption is eminently sound. If the determination of the Communists to destroy us is indeed as permanent, monolithic and unalterable as some of our own people seem to believe, then they have achieved a constancy of will that no movement or nation or individual has ever before achieved.

It is nonsense to suppose that the character and objectives of communism are unalterable. Change and the susceptibility to change are practically a law of human life, and however much the Communists may imagine that they have altered or conquered human nature, it is a demonstrable fact that they have not. Even the dreariest of Chinese or Soviet fanatics is a human being as well as a Communist, subject to one degree or another — however little he may like it — to the same weaknesses, the same hopes and the same temptations that characterize all human life. In a way which the leaders of the Communist world would probably be the last to understand, they themselves as well as their peoples are connected with us by unalterable bonds of a common human nature. This common humanity can be a powerful and constructive instrument for change in the hands of those who understand it.

Great changes have in fact taken place and are continuing to take place in the Communist countries. On the

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whole there has been a tendency toward more liberal — or less dictatorial — domestic policies and more conservative — or less aggressive — foreign policies. Our policy should take close account of the nature and extent of these changes and of the diverse character of the world's Communist regimes. They range from China at one extreme, which hangs back in fanaticism and an aggressive foreign policy, to Yugoslavia at the other extreme, which has ceased to be a member of the bloc and pursues policies which are often friendly and seldom harmful to the West.

The Soviet Union stands approximately midway between the Chinese and Yugoslav extremes. During the period of Khrushchev's rule the apparatus of police terror was dismantled and after the great Cuban crisis of 1962 the regime adopted a policy of limited accommodations with the West. The new regime of Brezhnev and Kosygin has somewhat tempered the competition in insults with China but otherwise seems to be maintaining the Khrushchev policy of "goulash" communism at home and generally prudent policies abroad.

The area of most rapid, although widely varying, change in the Communist world is Eastern Europe. Even aside from Yugoslavia, which is far in the vanguard and cannot be considered a member of the bloc, the winds of change are being felt in most of the states which we have considered satellites of the Soviet Union. Poland has enjoyed a considerable measure of independence in its internal affairs since Gomulka's successful defiance of Khrushchev in 1956. Hungary has progressed considerably since the brutal suppression of its revolution in 1956 and the Kadar regime has won a measure of public acceptance by raising living standards and tolerating limited popular liberties. Except for the release of some political prisoners, Rumania remains a Stalinist dictatorship in its internal life but has openly defied the Soviet Union in pursuing an independent foreign economic policy. Czechoslovakia, which until recently was one of the most compliant satellites, is now beginning to stir in its internal life. Only East Germany and Bulgaria remain Stalinist dictatorships almost wholly under Soviet domination, while backward Albania has broken with the Soviet Union and become a Chinese Communist satellite.

Far from the monolith of Stalin's time, the Communist bloc — if it can still be called a bloc — presents the world with a panoply of change proceeding at widely varying rates. This situation presents the West with interesting and important opportunities to influence events in the Communist world in a direction favorable to Western security and interests. As the Communist states become less like each other, they become more like the rest of the world, subject to traditional aims and ambitions, to traditional pressures of nationalism, and — most important for our purposes — to traditional forms of external influence.

A highly diversified situation calls for highly diversified policies. This, I think, must be the key consideration in the Western effort to build bridges to the Communist world. Our purpose is not simply to advance some vague purpose of greater international understanding but to influence the pace and character of change in the Communist world in such a way as

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to discourage aggressive and expansionist policies toward the free world. To do this, we must differentiate carefully between one Communist country and another, rewarding those which show a greater inclination to confine the practice of their ideology within their own frontiers and to enter into friendly relations with the West and withholding our rewards and, when necessary, applying sanctions against those which continue to pursue expansionist policies.

There can be no such thing, under current world conditions, as a single American policy toward communism or toward the Communist bloc. An appropriate policy toward Yugoslavia must be different in certain respects from our policies toward the Soviet Union, and radically different from our policy toward Communist China.

Yugoslavia is a socialist state which permits its people considerable liberty, engages in experimental and pragmatic internal economic practices, and pursues a neutralist foreign policy which is free of Soviet control and not unfriendly to the West. Yugoslavia also exerts considerable influence on the Soviet bloc states of Eastern Europe, who admire Yugoslavia's progress and envy her independence.

From the point of view of our own national security, there are two important objectives to be served by a policy of friendly cooperation with Yugoslavia. The first is to strengthen Yugoslavia itself, with its sizable territory, developing economy, and substantial army, in the pursuit of its independent national policies. The second reason for good relations with Yugoslavia is its unique position as a bridge between East and West. When we engage in cordial political relations with the Yugoslavs and accord them most favored-nation treatment in trade, we are demonstrating to the other Communist states of Eastern Europe in the most persuasive possible way that there are attractive rewards to be gained by the adoption of friendly policies toward the West.

Poland and Hungary represent a lower gradation in the evolution of Communist states. Poland, like Yugoslavia, receives most-favored-nation treatment in trade with the United States and is permitted to buy surplus food products under Public Law 480. Poland, however, has regressed somewhat in the last few years toward more passive acceptance of Soviet leadership and for this reason, I would think that no new American initiatives are in order for the time being. As to Hungary, I think it is time for the United States to take cognizance of the Kadar regime's progress and internal liberalization by reestablishing the full diplomatic relations that were suspended at the time of the Revolution and perhaps as well by opening discussions for educational and cultural exchange.

Rumania has refused to subordinate its economy to an over-all plan for the bloc and the United States, quite wisely, has encouraged this defiance by concluding a trade agreement with Rumania. As to the other countries of the bloc, they have not yet progressed to a degree that would warrant new American policies in trade or in other fields, and, indeed, just as independence is encouraged by rewarding those who practice it, it must also be encouraged by withholding concessions from those who do not.

Twelve years ago the Eisenhower Administration came to power proclaiming a policy of "liberation" for Eastern Europe. That policy was a failure. When the workers of East Berlin rose in 1953 and again when the Hungarian people rebelled against their Communist rulers in 1956, the United States could not provide assistance beyond words of sympathy and concern. Despite the brave words of Secretary of States Dulles, the iron curtain was not "rolled back" in the 1950's except for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Austria, which was not accomplished by forcible liberation but by years of painstaking negotiations that finally produced the Austrian state treaty.

The "liberation" policy of the

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1950's failed because it purported, in its ill-defined way, to roll back the iron curtain by forcible means of one sort or another. It therefore came up against the realities of the nuclear age. When Eisenhower and Dulles were put to the test of using force to realize their declared objective, they recognized, quite wisely, that no policy can be sustained when its likely result will be the nuclear incineration of the world.

The changes that have taken place in Eastern Europe in the last few years have opened a new and far more realistic possibility for its gradual liberation. That possibility lies in the policies which we are now pursuing and which can be built upon and expanded in the years ahead. Just as the Soviets have sometimes profited by infiltrating and dividing free nations, we now have an opportunity to influence events in the countries of Eastern Europe in a way that will promote their liberty and our security. The skillful use of trade and diplomacy and educational and cultural exchange can do far more to bring about the libration of Eastern Europe than all the brave and hollow words that used to be uttered about "rolling back" the iron curtain.

It is not possible in a few words to outline a long-term policy for the Soviet Union. Broadly speaking, our Government has recognized — and I hope will continue to recognize — that the Soviet Union of Brezhnev and Kosygin is a markedly different country from the Russia of Stalin, posing the West with markedly different challenges and opportunities from those of twelve and even five years ago.

It is not to be expected that we will soon find it possible to build bridges to the Soviet Union comparable to those which can be built, say, to Yugoslavia or Poland or Hungary. The Soviet Union is second only to the United States in power and wealth, and it is the only nation in the world that poses a major military threat to the United States. Its policies are more moderate and more reasonable than they were a decade ago, and that is to be welcomed and encouraged. Unlike the nations of Eastern Europe, however, the Soviet Union has the power and the will to expand its influence when ever the opportunity arises. Accordingly, our policy toward the Soviet Union must be based somewhat less on measures of influence and accommodation and somewhat more on the other two major components of American security policy, the nuclear deterrent and the vitality of the Western Alliance.

The fact that the opportunities for building bridges are smaller in the case of the Soviet Union than they are in the case of Eastern Europe does not mean that they are unimportant. On the contrary, significant progress has been achieved and significant opportunities remain for limited accommodations between the Soviet Union and the West. The partial nuclear test ban treaty, the agreement not to put nuclear weapons in orbit around the earth, the sale of American surplus wheat for gold, and the cultural exchange program have all contributed to an improvement in relations and to a substantial reduction in the danger of war.

I do not think that we will soon solve the problems of Berlin and of a divided Germany, and I am absolutely certain we will not soon achieve the "general and complete disarmament" that both sides are so fond of talking about. I do think, however, that useful opportunities will continue to arise in such fields as commerce and cultural relations. I believe that we should pursue these opportunities patiently and persistently because, modest as they are, their cumulative effect is the gradual lessening of the danger of war, which is not a modest achievement but a very significant one.

It is not really useful to argue over a "hard" policy versus a "soft" policy in our relations with the Soviet Union. Implicit in the eternal and fatuous debate between "hawks" and "doves" is the assumption that our policy must

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be based solely on military power or solely on compromise and conciliation.

This is nonsense. A wise and far-sighted policy is one which is "tough" in response to provocation, as in the case of the Cuban missile crisis, conciliatory in response to demonstrations of cooperative intent, as in the case of the test ban treaty, and unerring in its dedication to the peace and security of the free world.

The instruments of policy should not be confused with the goals of policy. The nuclear deterrent, the Western Alliance and measures of East-West accommodation are not ends in themselves but instruments of policy. The task of statesmen is not to choose one or another for all purposes and for all time but to decide in each instance which instrument of policy or what combination of policies is most likely to contribute to the security of the United States and of the free world.

The aims of our policy toward the Soviet Union are necessarily limited.

They are limited because we are neither strong enough nor wise enough to eliminate all evil from the world and to bring about universal peace and justice. The issue between the Soviet Union and the West is not "Communism versus capitalism," but the universal and unlimited aims of Soviet policy. In the words of the French journalist and scholar Raymond Aron: "Should the Soviets ever recognize that their regime is only one of a number of possible ways of organizing industrial societies, the majority of democrats—while continuing to regard certain practices of the Soviet regime as deploable, inefficient or inhuman—would no longer feel obliged to maintain an attitude of active hostility to the Soviet Union."

China, with its ideological fanaticism, expansionist ambitions, and relentless hostility to the United States, poses a challenge of a different nature for American policy. It is to be hoped that in time, perhaps in ten or twenty years, the Chinese Communist leaders, like the Russians before them, will become somewhat less fanatic and somewhat more realistic in their view of the world. When they do—if they do—it will be wise and desirable to try to build bridges between China and the West. In the meantime we can make it clear that they can have peaceful and even cordial relations with the West whenever they abandon their policies of aggression and subversion.

Until they do, however, our policy must be one of containing Chinese power just as we contained the power of Stalinist Russia. To put it another way, until China shows a far more cooperative disposition toward the free world, we shall have to base our policy on diplomatic, military and economic measures against Chinese Communist expansion, while withholding proposals for accommodation. Specifically, I think there is nothing to be gained at present either by according diplomatic recognition to Communist China or by acquiescing in its admission to the United Nations.

Wisely or not, we have withheld recognition and opposed Chinese Communist admission to the United Nations for fifteen years as expressions of our disapproval of their regime and its policies. Having withheld recognition as a mark of our disapproval, we cannot now accord it without having it taken as an expression of approval and acceptance. Since we do not and cannot approve of the present policies of the Chinese Communist regime, I do not think we should take a step which would convey the impression of approval, even though it *should* not have that effect. As to Chinese Communist membership in the United Nations, I think we must expect it sooner or later, but if it occurs before Communist China alters its present policies, I would expect the American vote to be cast in opposition.

There is little to be pleased with in the current situation in the Far East and little to be optimistic about in the prospects of an aggressive Communist China arming itself with nuclear weapons. But, as George Kennan wrote recently, ". . . we must not make the mistake of taking any of this

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as absolute and unchangeable. These, too, are only men. They once had mothers and childhood and affections. They are, today, what circumstances have made of them. It is circumstances which will determine what they, or their successors, will be in 10 or 20 years' time. . . . Neither these men in Peking nor the regime over which they preside are immune to the laws of change that govern all human society, if only because no single generation, anywhere, ever sees things exactly the same as the generation that went 10 years before it."

These, I believe, are some of the ways in which bridges can be built between East and West. The purpose of these brdiges is to open channels of communication across the chasm of misunderstanding that divides the human community and to break through some of the prevailing myths of international relations, of which the most dangerous is the belief that different political philosophies cannot survive together in the same world, that sooner or later one must prevail over all others.

I do not know whether the ideological and national animosities of our time will erode away in the decades and centuries ahead. I do believe, however, that the lessons of the past offer grounds for hope that they will, if only we will let them. What is called for is a sense of historical perspective in meeting the crises and tensions of the moment — a perspective from which we will perceive that the doctrines and the causes that arouse men to violence are transitory, that more often than not they fade into irrelevance with the erosion of time and circumstances. Only from such a perspective can we hope to build bridges that will stand — bridges that will bring a divided world together in a reawakened awareness of its common humanity, in a reawakened understanding that the common hopes, common interests and common dangers that unite men are far more important than the ideologies that divide them.

Capital Romance

By A. H. Berzen

Mr. Floss worked in the Material Analysis Section, Division of Special Surveys. He was an Associate Planning Consultant.

Miss Parcher, of the Requirements and Allocations Section, was in love with Mr. Floss. Whenever she had to check data about policy procedure directives — for signature of Miss Rondo, her Unit Chief — she'd consult Mr. Floss' files.

Miss Parcher would daintily pull up a chair and slowly go through the green filing cabinets in his office.

One April day, on such a jaunt across the corridor, she sensed that Mr. Floss had turned from the papers on his desk and was watching her. Clearly, an invitation, and so, a trifle breathlessly, she looked at him.

"Have you heard about the proposed merger?" she asked.

"Merger?"

"Yes. My section is to be absorbed by Contact and Liaison of Operating Services, over in the fifth wing."

He shook his head. "But they can't. Two units in the same section? They tried it with Review and Coordination. Morale and efficiently dropped."

"But it's already formulated. Miss Rondo is drafting a memo. The Unit Chiefs and Department Heads discussed it at yesterday's staff conference."

Mr. Floss ruffled his batch of papers.

"Mergers are bad for the smaller unit. You won't be happy there."

She swivelled around, facing him, and carefully crossed her legs.

"Perhaps —," he began. "Ah — perhaps we could arrange to transfer you to our section."

"Here?"

He nodded. "We could do with an efficient addition to our staff."

His heart thudded as he spoke. It was something of a commitment, but

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— well, such nice round knees. She was thin, of course, but there was still about her a hint of youth; it had not too long ago departed.

Miss Parcher leaned forward. "Would Miss Rondo release me?"

Something stirred within him. "I think it can be arranged. After all, I am Miss Rondo's superior."

By four grades, in fact. And so he had prior call on personnel. The pending merger was manifestly an emergency.

"Do you think you'd be happy here?" he asked.

"I've always wanted to work in 'SSD'."

"They you're willing to make the change?"

He reached toward his blue memorandum pads, deliberating on which size was most appropriate, and chose one.

"I'll start the papers. You'll have to prepare a fifty-seven, of course, and a sixty-two, and the security data. In triplicate."

He answered the phone. "Yes?" Yes, she's here. I'll tell her."

He replaced it. "You're wanted in your office."

Miss Parcher stood up quickly. **"Thank you, Mr. Floss, for — for** everything."

"I'm glad you will soon be with us."

After she left, Mr. Floss sat back. On their combined salaries, two people could manage very well. Yes, a definite possibility. Things did sometimes happen.

Miss Parcher did not consult his files for several days and he forgot the proposed organizational change. His in-grade promotion was going through channels. Reclassification and Assignment wanted another experience and qualification history. A change, anywhere in the Bureau, had repercussions. He'd be moved up a notch or two.

Toward the end of the week, Miss Parcher reappeared. She looked solemn.

"They've suspended the merger," she said.

"Suspended the merger?"

She searched his face for sympathy. The reclassification papers in his hand felt heavy. No merger. The effort of filling forms was wasted.

"It's probably for the best. I'd have had a tough time persuading Miss Rondo to let you go. It would be unfair, anyway, to deprive her of your services."

Miss Parcher paled.

"It couldn't have worked," he continued and sounded relieved, as though he'd escaped a falling object. His voice was louder now, and he spoke with authority.

"You tried," she said. "At least I have that."

Her hand was limp and moist in his. Somehow, this did not jibe with his plans and he was impatient for the encounter to end.

"Our files are still at your disposal," he said.

"I shall always consult them," she said triumphantly, and left.

Mr. Floss tucked his reclassification papers far back in his desk drawer. He couldn't let the affair end just like that. There were appearances to be maintained. He telephoned Miss Rondo.

"May I borrow Miss Parcher once in a while?"

"Certainly, Mr. Floss. I'm always glad when one of our staff is in demand. I can spare her this afternoon."

"Thanks. Not this afternoon."

"Any time at all, Mr. Floss."

He hung up and went to the window and looked out. The sunshine, the movement in the street, made him sigh softly. The episode was finished and, he told himself, he had carried it off rather well.

Bernie Yudain, writing in *Roll Call*, has revealed details of the AMA's medicare program: "Keep warm, get plenty of sleep and take two aspirin."

Bernie has also renamed The Great Society. He says it should be called The Pretty Good Society.

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PARTIAL POST

A Justifiably Ill-Tempered Report on the State of the Mails, Indicating That What Snow & Rain & Heat & Gloom of Night Could Not Do, the White House, Congress & Mr. Gronouski Can.

Here are some episodes from the recent history of U.S. postal service:

—About a week before Christmas, a first class, special delivery package was mailed to us (at the cost of $3.53) from Warren, R. I.

It took four days to get to Washington, D.C.

Back in the mid-19th Century the Pony Express used to carry the mails from St. Joseph, Mo., to the West Coast at a speed of about 200 miles a day. That is more than twice as fast as our package traveled down the East Coast of mid-20th Century America.

When we called to investigate the delay, we were told by a postal official that it was not unusual. "We're just getting some special delivery mail in from Newark that is postmarked three days ago," he told us reassuringly.

As we were waiting for our piece of mail, the Washington Post Office, according to a local paper, was laying off some 2000 temporary carriers and clerks because "of the decline in mail volume."

—A West Coast customer mailed an $18,000 payment to a firm in his state last March 26. It arrived on May 6.

The general manager of the firm noted, "The average speed of this delivery calculates out to be 500 feet per hour."

—An eastern department store wasted $20,000 in mailing promotional material announcing a special sale because the letters took 6 or 7 days point to point in the same city.

—A Congressman from Utah had his Washington office send him, by air mail, special delivery, a packet of letters prepared for his signature. They were mailed in Washington on July 15 and arrived in Utah on August 5.

—A *Saturday Evening Post* subscriber in Chicago, Ill. received no magazine for three weeks, finally got four issues in one day.

—Subscribers are still writing us asking what happened to the November issue. It was mailed out in early November. Some readers received it on time, some received it after the December issue, and some didn't get it at all.

—Representative Charles Goodling of Pennsylvania has a borough in his district called East Berlin. Says Goodling, "Although mail I address to East Berlin invariably carries the word 'Pennsylvania,' in one-quarter inch bold-face type as part of the address, some letters have been sent to East Berlin, Germany. Others have been returned to my office with a notice that I must affix foreign postage."

It would be nice to believe, as Postmaster General Gronouski would like us to, that these are isolated aberrations in an otherwise efficient and speedy postal system.

Unfortunately, this just isn't true. Post Office service has been getting worse for some time and there is no end in sight. As the Salem, Va., *Times-Register* put it last year:

"It began as an 'economic move' in the Truman Administration. Someone in the upper reaches of the postal power echelon decided that two letter deliveries a day were too many. Henceforth, only one home delivery would be made. This, the Post Office assured us, would mean much faster processing of mail.

"Next the price of stamps went up from three to four cents. This was necessitated by the increase in the speedup of mail brought about by the decline in the deliveries mentioned.

"Between 1962 and 1963, 1300

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employees in the post offices over the country were eliminated, and the price of stamps went up to five cents.

". . . The Post Office is further curtailing its services after hiking prices on all second and third class mail.

"Henceforth there will be a reduction of parcel post deliveries which will be cut back from 6 to 5 days a week. And this, of course, is a perfectly logical development. Rates on parcel post have increased 13 percent while the services will be reduced 18 percent.

"It merely stands to reason that the more you pay, the less you will receive."

The latest word is that the Administration is having second thoughts about raising postal rates again, but even this possibility remains.

Some months ago, Jerome Keating, President of the National Association of Letter Carriers, summed up the situation:

". . . the postal service of the United States is in the process of swift and continuing deterioration. Something must be done to preserve and improve it.

"We are greatly distressed over the callous disregard shown service by present day postal administrators. The prime consideration now goes to economy and curtailment. Service is seldom stressed as the prime objective.

Postal administrators have slashed and sliced and reduced the postal service in as many ways as the human mind could devise, without actually killing it. The service, as a result of their ministrations, is a mere shadow of its former self, but it is still technically alive and breathing."

A noticeable worsening of the situation has occurred since John Gronouski assumed the Postmaster-Generalship. He has served as a willing accomplice for an economy-obsessed President who has used the Post Office to help build an image of federal frugality.

President Johnson's passion to demonstrate reduction in federal personnel was at least indirectly responsible for the following memorandum distributed by the postal service officer in Spokane, Washington, last spring:

"Your response to recent inquiry regarding employment of substitute clerks during the pay period June 6 to 19 has been noted.

"It would be appreciated if you would review clerk and substitute schedules to determine whether you could absorb some of the absence or leave hours and perhaps place one of your substitutes on a leave without pay status for the period June 6 to 19 this year.

"The number of paychecks issued will be the criteria which will determine your adherence to the President's program to reduce clerical hire, and not the number of hours worked.

Perhaps you have a temporary substitute on your rolls who works a few hours per week or fills in when a regular is on leave, which could be

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taken up by a substitute or yourself."

In Fresno, Calif., according to John W. McKay, president of the National Postal Union, "the postmaster was ordered by the regional director to eliminate eight employees, one way or another, on or before the end of June, in order to comply with orders received from the Department with respect to the economy program.

"In discussing this with our representative in Fresno, I was advised that the orders came directly to the postmaster; that they did not care how he made the reduction, just get rid of eight bodies."

Such manipulations may help the President's employment statistics, but are of no assistance in the delivery of the mails.

Reductions in service don't help, either.

As one mailer noted last year:

"At 2 cents postage we got delivery twice daily. At 3 cents postage we laid off half our carriers and got mail once a day in the forenoon. At 4 cents we again laid off carriers, increased the length of routes and got mail sometimes by noon. At 5 cents we raised the pay of carriers, laid off enough to cover the cost and again gave them more mail to carry. We now get mail in the afternoon. I expect the next move will be 8-cent mail, no carriers, and mail delivered by the postmaster once a week."

One can always save money by cutting service, but you quickly reach a level of unsatisfactory service. This fact, readily apparent to the average mailer, remains beyond the comprehension of the Post Office, White House and Congress.

The heart of the problem is the widely held belief that there is something morally wrong with a postal service that loses money.

The Post Office does lose money at a cost to the taxpayers of more than $500 million dollars every year since 1957. This figure went as high as $890 million during one year of the Eisenhower Administration and President Kennedy was never able to get it below $800 million.

The combined effects of a postal rate increase, a postal pay increase and service economies has left President Johnson with reduced postal deficits but still running over $600 million.

These figures include the sum allocated by Congress for 'public services.' This sum — about $450 million recently — represents the amount Congress subsidizes the Post Office for specific unprofitable operations such as reduced rates for non-profit organizations, newspapers mailed within a county, educational mailings and mailings for the blind. Also included is a subsidy for the extra expense involved in maintaining rural postal service.

While first class and airmail pay for themselves, second and third class mail are big money losers for the Post Office. Second class postage (newspapers, magazines, etc.) pays only 29% of the total cost of mailing and the 18 billion pieces of third class mail (circulars, advertising matter) dispatched annually pay only two-thirds of their way.

If one is concerned with the postal deficit, the obvious corrective measure is an increase in second and third class rates. It was indicated that President Johnson would ask for just such an increase but now he has back away, at least temporarily.

Powerful opposition is always raised to an increase in second and third class rates. The second class rate users have the strongest case, on the grounds that it is in the interest of a democracy to encourage the flow of information. Too many magazines and newspapers have their financial backs against the wall today and a rate increase could have serious consequences for a good number of them.

Third class mail, consisting as it does of copious quantities of advertising, has less clear virtues. It is argued, however, that direct mail advertising helps the American economy

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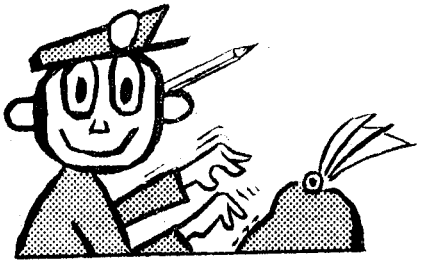
and therefore is worthy of a subsidy if necessary.

Whatever the merits of such arguments, raising second and third class rates is not a politically pleasing experience for an administration. Men like Mr. Johnson and Mr. Gronouski are therefore encouraged to look for alternative means of reaching their goal of eliminating the postal deficit. The answer, found some time ago and being refined under the present administration, is repeated tightening of the belt.



Mr. Zip: More Work for Mailers

As Frederick Belen, Deputy Postmaster General, said in a speech last fall: "The Post Office is working under the most stringent budget in its history."

It is worth noting that even while eliminating post offices, lengthening routes, and in other ways struggling to stay within this budget, the Post Office has found time and money tc engage in a strange collection of activities including crusades against pornographic literature worthy of Bible-belt preachers, maintenance of peepholes in employee washrooms, the development of a questionable program of intercepting communist literature from abroad, the issuance of instructions preventing gambling by employees even when not at work, and the establishment of mail covers for the benefit of law enforcement agencies.

While Mr. Gronouski has ordered an end to the peepholes, his department is still keeping active in the other fields mentioned.

Meanwhile the Post Office, faced with budget slashes and a parsimonious administration, has shown considerable ingenuity in coming up with ideas to place more of the postal burden on the mailer. Invariably, these ideas are introduced with great blowing of the trumpets and with pronouncements that they represent another example of progress by your Post Office Department. But more and more frequently, they are in reality primarily new schemes to get the mailer to do more of the work.

For example:

—*The Zip Code.* The mailer provides the correct routing of the mail. The Post Office is now extending this to the point of requiring businesses to pre-sort by Zip Code.

—*The ABCD System.* Get it in the ABCD box before eleven and it will be delivered in the downtown area by afternoon. Here is a device permitting the Post Office to even out its work load, bringing in more mail during the light morning hours. ABCD is not so much a change in Post Office procedures as it is a change in the mailing pattern of businesses.

—*VIM.* Vertical Improved Mail is the Post Office plan to encourage firms that are building offices to install a dumb-waiter system for mail to speed it to the various floors. One Dallas builder is putting in one of these systems at the cost of $500 thousand.

The innovation permits elimination of Post Office mail deliveries throughout office buildings.

—Encouragement of large mailers to truck their mail to central distribution points. As Mr. Gronouski explained to a House appropriations subcommittee last year:

"We had a case just around Christmas where a major mailer had something like 19 carloads of mail that had to go out immediately. We think he would have gotten better service and certainly better postal service if he would have trucked some of this mail not to the nearest post office but

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to some of the sectional centers involved in the distribution."

The obvious extension of this line of reasoning is that the firm would have gotten still better service if it had hand delivered each piece of mail itself.

—Pool casing. A system in which mailers place packages headed for one city in a carton addressed to the postmaster of that city where it is opened and distributed.

The Post Office figures it saves 15% of the mailing cost when pool casing is used. Further, damage is reduced. (Incidentally, this damage, prior to pool casing, was running as high as 18% for Frigidaire parts sent through the mail. Mr. Gronouski has announced that steps — in addition to pool casing — have been taken during the past year to reduce parcel post damage. Improvements will be welcomed by the individual mailer who doesn't send enough packages to pool case and who can't afford having one out of six packages damaged.)

These programs may all be worthwhile and practical. But they should be recognized for what they are. They do not represent improved government postal service; they simply mean the transference of postal service responsibility from the government to the mailer.

The National Association of Manufacturers conducted a survey of its members in 1964 and found that only one out of seven expressed complete satisfaction with the postal service.

Among the complaints received were:

—Unaccountable delay of first-class and airmail letters.

—Delay and damage in parcel post.

—Curtailed delivery and shortened post office hours.

—Special delivery that takes longer than ordinary mail.

—Lost mail.

The NAM reported that members are resorting to various means to improve mail service. "One firm," the NAM said, "requires its salesmen to mail separate copies of each order fro different boxes. All orders which re quire prompt delivery must be tele phoned in at toll rates."

Other members were trucking ma to post offices, "a service supposedl covered by postage, but used by bus ness to gain time and convenience."

And significantly, the report in cludes this statement:

"While some responding NAM members were conscious of the climb ing cost of postal service, no one com plained of this — except that decline in service occurred simultaneously wit the rate increases."

It is unfortunate that the Post Of fice should be deteriorating, becaus a considerable tradition of service being destroyed in the process.

Mr. Gronouski apparently is no part of that tradition. When ap proached by a group of citizens in Fridley, Minn., seeking a post office for their town, he told them, "The way to get a post office here is to sen a Democratic Congressman to Wash ington this fall."

As a Minneapolis paper commented editorially:

"One may interpret this somewhat astonishing suggestion in two ways:

"1. Even though Fridley deserves a post office on the merits of its case, it cannot get one unless the commu nity elects a Democratic representative, or

"2. Even though Fridley does not deserve a post office on the merits of its case, it can get one by electing a Democrat."

Lower level postal officials, in our own experience, generally take a dif ferent view of their duties. We have almost always found postal officials

"You must never try to really understand Walter Lippmann. It's beyond us Republicans. I've read his books and his articles and from a political standpoint, I find him confusing."

—Senator George Murphy in a speech to a GOP women's club.

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Ben Ezzell, editor of the Canadian, Tex., RECORD, wrote some unflattering remarks about the Post Office's Christmas stamp. He mentioned that the stamp looked quite like the TB Society's Christmas Seal.

Well, sure enough, someone mailed him a letter with "a pretty red and green design under the cancellation" that "wasn't a postage stamp at all . . . . but an old-familiar Tuberculosis Society Christmas Seal!"

from the window clerk to postmaster helpful, courteous and competent.

But what can the best-meaning postal official do in a system that requires service to suffer repeatedly in the interests of economy?

There is a story told of the time the late William Faulkner was given the postmastership of his town as a political plum. He quit after three days, explaining, "I didn't want to have to bow down to every SOB who wants a three-cent stamp."

Such an attitude might be expected of a Nobel-prize winning writer. But when the Post Office Department, the White House and Congress operate on the same principle, we are in trouble.

UN Ambassador Adlai Stevenson reports receiving some interesting mail. One lady wrote him:

"Why couldn't the delegates take a break every 20 minutes or so and go out into the corridors and sing songs? Surely this would show the delegates that they could be in harmony at some point."

Another said, "Your posture at the Security Council is negative. Please sit up straight so you'll make a good impression on the underdeveloped nations."

BOOK REVIEW

Your Federal Income Tax, 1965 Ed., Government Printing Office, 159 Pages, Illust. 50c

"Poor Wilbur," a friend of Representative Mills remarked after a tax hearing. "Everytime he tries to simplify the tax laws, he adds 46 pages to them."

Poor Wilbur and other congressional tax experts have failed again. The 1965 edition of *Your Federal Income Tax*, reflecting the changes made by the 1964 tax law, is 15 pages longer than the previous edition. Further, the type has been reduced in size and the easy-to-read two column format has been tossed out in favor of three cramped columns on each page.

IRS POP ART

(From Your Federal Income Tax)

Close as we can figure it, the number of words needed to guide the weary taxpayer through the perilous days immediately prior to April 15th have been increased by close to 50%.

Last year, for example, we were heartened by the news that an income averaging provision had been added for the benefit of those persons whose income changed rapidly from year to year, including artists, writers and prizefighters.

But what the press didn't tell us artists, writers and prizefighters was how we were meant to average this radically changing income we received.

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Now, thanks to eight added pages in this book, including a comprehensive example of how a certain Mr. Brown did it, we have found out. To wit (in part):

Under this method, in general and simplifed terms, your first step is to compute the tax on the sum of: (1) 133 1/3% of your average base period income, (2) your average base period capital gain net income, if any and (3) 1/5 of your averagable income. The second step is to compute the tax on the sum of 133 1/3% of your average base period income and your average base period capital gain net income, if any, and subtract it from the amount of tax computed under the first step. The result, the tax attributable to 1/5 of your averagable income, is multiplied by 5 and added to the tax on 133 1/3% of your average base period income and your average base period capital gain net income, if any. This gives you your tax under the averaging method.

The income averaging method may result in a lower total tax because it taxes your entire averagable income at the rate or rates applicable to 1/5 your averagable income when it is added to 133 1/3% of your average base period income and your average base period capital gain net income, if any.

Such "general and simplified terms" are enough to make Cassius Clay hang up his gloves and get a salaried job.

Eight pages of explanation plus the encouragement of Mr. Brown's evident success in handling the matter is not even sufficient to take care of the problem, for there is a section included called "Matters Not Discussed in this Chapter." The IRS lists eleven such matters and suggests that you get hold of your District Director for further enlightenment.

Former tax boss Mortimer Caplin's friendly "Dear Reader" letter in the front of the 1964 edition has been replaced in 1965 by a more formal "Message to Taxpayers" issued by an anonymous Commissioner of Internal Revenue. This was probably due to Mr. Caplin's resignation while the 1965 edition was being prepared. We look forward to the 1966 edition for a view of Sheldon Cohen's literary style.

We are glad to see that Frank B. and Evelyn H. Jones of 1150 Elm Rd., Hometown, N. Y., are still being used as the typical American taxpayer for the purpose of the sample filled-in form on page 5.

The Joneses, when we left them last year, had a total income of $18,240.14 and, after itemizing deductions of $4,473.15 and subtracting 7 exemptions, a final tax of $2,016.72.

This year, despite the boost given the economy by the tax cut, the Joneses report a total income of only $17,890.14 for a total tax of $1,759.81.

We can see why the IRS likes the Joneses as their typical taxpayers. Although the income from their retail store did fluctuate, the rest of their income and deductions remained remarkably stable, including $50.00 received in an essay contest for the second year in a row.

In fact, some aspects of the Joneses return look slightly suspicious. How does one explain the theft loss of a camera (value $79.50) reported on both the 1963 and 1964 return? The IRS would never let *us* get away with that.

We have written to Mr. Jones to find out how he does it, but as of press time we have received no answer. We're afraid we'll just have to make a big pot of coffee, haul out *Your Federal Income Tax*, swallow a No-Doze, and get to it again.

We just hope nobody has any more ideas about simplifying the income tax.

The Bogart cult is going too far. According to the *New York Times*, a pianist at a Williams College concert stopped at the end of a cadenza for expected applause. Instead, from the back of the room came the cry: "Play it again, Sam."

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The Emigrants' Letter to the Fatherland

Today it is no fear
and no despair
that prompts our
feeble scribble

neither as in the past
our common past
out there
do we begin with
invocation
of
the gods.

Today we will not
beat our heads against the wall
and curse

nor dream of you
at night
and sob
though we have
heart for it
and most
certain right.

We will no more
recite agelong
our litany of wrong
torture the national
conscience
till
it
writhe.

And for our
old love's sake
we ask apology
no longer.

how many springs
have passed
in petaled
stars
What silver winters
stark
as the paupers'
hunger?

We forgive you
merciless one!
who drove us forth with scarred
and swollen hands

our only shirt
the stranger's tithe
yet you had bread
and happiness
to feed
us
all

had
you
but felt
the peasant's honest fervor
looked once into his soul
misled you
figured up
your purse's
fill

We left
you
never
knew
and only
death
can
now
return
us
to
you.

Yet this you owe us
by the earnest will
that offered you our
generous hands and hearts

you took the first
for toil and spurned
the latter
it is no matter
but by the right
of blood-sweat agony

we ask imperiously
that bread make sweet your land
your fields bear
bloom unmarred
and
that our brothers
breathe
free
heaven undeterred.

These words our bitterness
dictates who are
in an alien place
scarred by your every
scar

and
who on saint days
to wish you good
our filial prayer
your strength
and

the
wise might
of
brotherhood

—*Antoni Gronowicz*

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NEO-FASCIST HIDEOSITY

By Edward P. Morgan

WASHINGTON
JANUARY 6

It is a pity that President Johnson's campaign to protect and preserve the beauties of the capital and the country could not have been launched sooner — say a decade ago. It might have prevented the rise of the latest man-made monstrosity to grace, or rather disgrace, the Washington skyline, the Rayburn building, which was the scene, this morning, of an ironic ceremony.

Shortly after 10 a.m., Mrs. Lyndon Johnson gracefully unveiled in the huge main stair hall of this marble-encrusted $100,000,000 edifice a life-sized bronzed statue of the late, great and beloved Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas. In her words of dedication the first lady made it clear that the bald-headed Mr. Sam was one of the most unpretentious politicians who ever lived. That he was, and what's more he didn't like pretense in others. He read his own mail and he was inclined to pay more attention to a letter written in pencil on tablet paper than on fancy stationery. One of the ironies of today's occasion springs from the fact that the likeness of this prudent, unostentatious man stands in one of the gaudiest monuments to bad taste and waste of the taxpayer's money ever erected. A deeper, double-headed irony is inbedded in the fact that it was Speaker Rayburn himself who fathered this enterprise and his devoted protege, Lyndon Johnson, when he was majority leader of the Senate, who hastened it along.

From the ABC Radio program "Edward P. Morgan and the News," sponsored by the AFL-CIO

Ironic Unveiling

It's not that a third House office building, which the Rayburn structure is, was not needed. It was. With Congressional committees and responsibilities multiplying, space has long been at a premium on Capitol Hill. But Topsy was a mothered midget compared to the unattended way in which the Rayburn building grew. The speaker proposed it 10 years ago and it flourished, or at least the cost of it did. Nobody knows what the original price tag was supposed to be, precisely. A figure of $66,000,000 was mentioned but as anybody who has enlarged his rumpus room knows, construction costs escalate. Now the total is bumping $100,000,000 and some estimates say it will be $122,000,000 before everything is finished. In any case it is already the most expensive office building ever built, anywhere, and one breathless calculation has it costing twice as much as the four existing House and Senate office buildings combined.

And what are the Congressmen and their constituents getting for the money? After subtracting fountains, two gymnasiums, a swimming pool, cavernous corridors, sweeping staircases gargoyles, and other miscellaneous fixtures, 15 per cent of gross floor space is left for Congressional

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offices — which the building was supposed to be needed for in the first place.

The story is being told here of the young son of a newly elected Congressman saying his prayers before going to bed. "God bless Daddy," the boy prayed, "and God bless Mommy and God bless Sister. Well God, I guess this is good-bye. We're moving to Washington."

Most members of Congress work like troopers and earn their salaries—recently raised to $30,000—and their various accoutrements. But the extravagant saga of the newest House office building has become so embarrassing — even before it is officially opened and occupied—that a reluctant legislative branch is at last tolerating a full audit by that governmental watchdog, the General Accounting Office, of the Capitol Architect's Office, headed by J. George Stewart, once a Congressman from Delaware but never an architect. The GAO is trying to get at all the whys, wherefores and how-comes of the costs and functions of the Rayburn building. Passionately defending the structure, Texas Congressman Wright Patman described it today as a "bargain of the first magnitude" which will endure for the next thousand years or more.

As already noted, the bargain is questionable but the durability appears to be a heartbreaking fact. It's as if Architect Stewart and his men had bought the Rock of Gibraltar and set it down, still crated, on Independence Avenue. Its massive gracelessness may outlast the pyramids of Egypt and puzzle archeologists of future centuries as to the nature of the phaoronic nightmare in which it was conceived.

Washington, unfortunately, seems to be subdued if not crushed by the very weight of the artless piles of much new federal construction. And there should be no astonishment over the excessive cost and neo-fascist hideosity of the Rayburn Building. It only perpetuates the rich tradition of the second Senate office building, completed some years ago at a cost substantially upwards of $30,000,000 and loaded like a minefield with expensive mistakes, ranging from electric clocks whose hands were too heavy, to a six-million-dollar senatorial subway whose car wheels made too much noise.

The national capital is a beautiful city and, happily, persons in high places and low have recently become conscious of the need to enhance and establish its beauty. But unless the GAO's inquiry stuns the lawmakers into a new, perceptive and, one might add, constructive sense of responsibility, federal buildings will continue to be built which will look, like a camel, as if they had been put together by a committee.

Not all freshman Congressmen are completely impressed with the stately grandeur of Capitol Hill.

A new representative from Michigan told us that he's found some cockroaches in his office. He also discovered a mousetrap. He added, somewhat ruefully, "It obviously had been used."

HUMANISM

John Dewey, Rudolf Dreikurs, Erich Fromm, Julian Huxley, Linus Pauling, Carl Rogers, Bertrand Russell, Margaret Sanger, Leo Szilard, and B. F. Skinner have joined. . . . . Why haven't YOU? Free information: AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION, Humanist House, Department Ti, Yellow Springs, Ohio, 45387.

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BACK-ISSUE INDEX

Each month, THE IDLER prints an index of articles from past issues that have continuing interest. While they last, these back issues may be ordered from THE IDLER, 125 5th St. NE, Washington 2, D. C. at 50c a copy. A full index for 1964 will be found in the January 1965 issue. Please enclose the proper amount. We can not bill. OOP: Out of print.

ABOLITION OF PROPERTY — What does property mean? Is there any left? Lewis Smith presents an interesting thesis. (Feb. '65)

CONGRESS — Review of legislation not acted upon by the 88th Congress (Jan. '65) OOP

DESALINATION — Background report on government's program (Feb. '65)

DRAFT—Sen. Gaylord Nelson argues for an end to the draft. (Jan. '65) OOP —Why servicemen don't reenlist. (Feb. '65)

FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD — Rep. Wright Patman examines some of the deficiencies in the Federal Reserve system (Dec. '64) OOP

VOTING REGISTRATION — Why millions are disenfranchised by restrictive registration laws (Oct. '64)

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The IDLER

MARCH 1965

NATIONAL SECURITY AND HUMPTY DUMPTY ..... Page 1

THE IDLER'S JOURNAL ..... Page 6

ON BUILDING BRIDGES ..... Page 9

CAPITAL ROMANCE ..... Page 19

PARTIAL POST ..... Page 21

BOOK REVIEW ..... Page 26

EMIGRANTS' LETTER ..... Page 28

NEO-FASCIST HIDEOSITY ..... Page 29

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